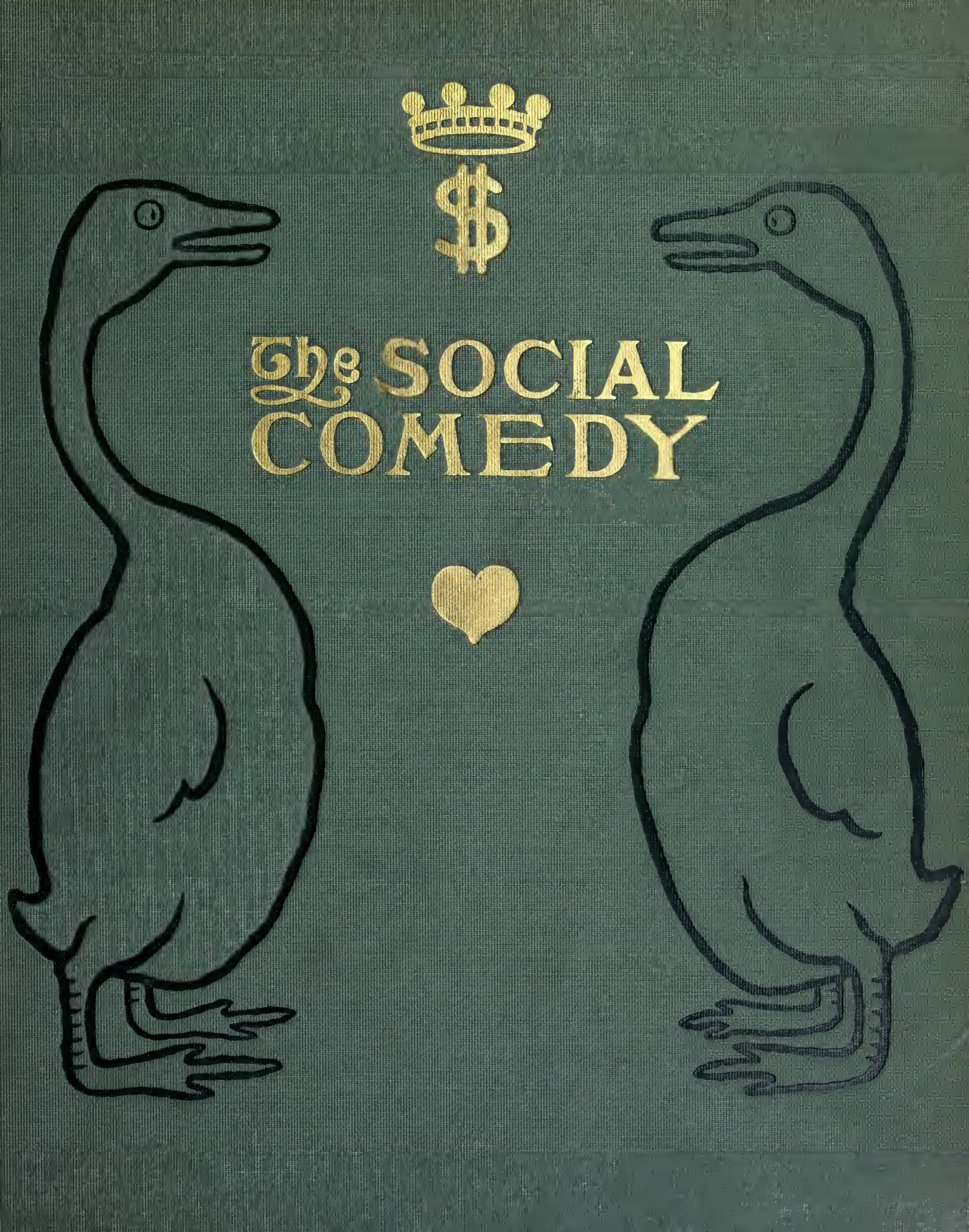
The SOCIAL COMEDY

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THE SOCIAL COMEDY.

"The world is a comedy to those that think."—HORACE WALPOLE

NEW YORK
LIFE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
1906

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by
LIFE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
New York City.

FOURTH EDITION.

THE SCHILLING PRESS, NEW YORK.

The Social Comedy

THE PROLOGUE.

She: Why such a hurry to marry, Dick? We've only been engaged three months.
"Yes, I know; but I am afraid you will get tired of me."

NOT TO BLAME.

The Elderly Lady: They say his wife has money.

"Well, that isn't his fault. They've only been married a short time."

AN INTERCEPTED VALENTINE.

For love is Heaven.

—The Lay of the Last Minstrel.

REJECTED!

"Let a man try to the very uttermost to *speak* what he means before *singing* is had recourse to."—*Thomas Carlyle.*

WHO CARES?

RECONSIDERED.

He: You need not fear. I shall do nothing desperate because you have refused me.
"Then, darling, I repent. It was only the thought that you might do something romantic that made me refuse you."

She: But why look so blue? Papa says he will buy all my clothes after we are married.
"I was wondering what we would have to eat."

"Well, I must be going."

"Why not wait a few minutes and have a look at the morning papers?"

MAROONED.

JUST AFTER THE DRAW.

THE MAIN POINT.

"How can you want to marry my daughter if you have never met her and know nothing about her?"
"But I know all about you, sir."

Billy is an enthusiastic fisherman, but he says the next time he goes fishing with a woman—but why repeat such language?

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

After the campaign.

RETRIBUTION.

He (just accepted): I must go now and break my engagement with Helen. She'll make a row.
She (sotto voce): So will *you* when I break our engagement.

Bridegroom: It was fine of your father to provide you with such a trousseau. It helps us out wonderfully.
"Doesn't it? Why I shan't need any more clothes for nearly a month."

A NECESSARY PART.

"The doctor says I am badly run down and must go away for six months."

"But, John, dear, I can't leave town."

"That's part of the cure."

"They say poor Clara consulted the stars before marrying him."

"And what was the result?"

"They all gave him a good character except one vaudeville star."

He: It is nothing against her that she is beautiful
"Decidedly not! Such beauty as that can only be acquired."

TO A MILKMAID

I HAIL thee, O Milkmaid!
Goddess of the gaudy morn. Hail!
Across the mead tripping,
Invariably across the mead tripping,
The merry mead with cowslips blooming,
With daisies blooming,
The Milkmaid also more or less blooming!
I hail thee, O Milkmaid!
I recognize the value of thy pail in literature and art.
What were a pastoral poet without thee?
Oh, I know thee, Milkmaid!
I hail thy jaunty juvenescence.
I know thy eighteen summers and thy eternal springs.
Ay, I know thy trials!
I know how thou art outspread over pastoral poetry.
Rampant, ubiquitous, inevitable, thy riotings in pastoral poetry.
And in masterpieces of pastoral art!
How oft have I seen thee sitting;
On a tri-legged stool sitting;
On the wrong side of the cow sitting;
Garbed in all thy preposterous paraphernalia.
I know thy paraphernalia—
Yea, even thy impossible milk pail and thy improbable bodice.
Short-skirted Siren!
Big-hatted Beauty!
What were the gentle spring without thee?
I hail thee!
I hail thy vernality, and I rejoice in thy hackneyed ubiquitousness.
I hail the superiority of thy inferiorness, and
I lay at thy feet this garland of gratuitous
Hails!

Carolyn Wells.

A MYSTERY

Which was afterwards explained.

"Cheer up, George. Why are you so sombre?"
"Didn't you hear I lost my wife last week?"
"Bless me! That was very careless of you!"

Jessie: Is there anything more embarrassing than blushing when you shouldn't?
"Yes; not blushing when you should."

CHRISTMAS EVE WITH COONTOWN'S FOUR HUNDRED.

The Chairman: By de ananamus consent ob de partisipents in dis ebenin's festivities, de prize fo' de mos' gorgeous comparisoned couple am awarded to Brer Whiffles and lady, a pair ob inlaid walnut finished hair brushes.

Despairing Artist: Now, if Mrs. Hardy had a more cheerful expression——

The Old Man: Jane, he wants you to stop thinking about me, the cook's going, and your other trials, and put your mind on Maria's new baby.

"Why did you kiss me?'

"Well, I heard you were a woman with a past, and I thought I would give you a little present."

She: I don't think mother likes to have me sit alone with you.

"Why not?"

"Well, she is afraid you might try to kiss me."

A CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE.

She: It tells here of a man in Chicago who hasn't spoken to his wife in fifteen years. "Perhaps he is waiting for a chance."

"Now, auntie, you know I want to marry Jack, and you know you are going to leave me all your money so we can set ourselves up nicely."

"But good gracious, child, I am not going to die yet!"

"Of course you're not, you dear old thing, and I wouldn't have you for the world. But don't you ever get any fun out of anticipation?"

"But, Sappho, in marrying this Chinaman, have you thought of what your children will be?"
"Yes'm. I know they'll be Jews, but I can't help it."

Billy: Yes! I paid twenty thousand dollars for this country place six months ago, and now I'll sell it for half price.
"Good heavens! Is that the effect you have on a neighborhood?"

"What are your intentions regarding my daughter?"
"What are yours?"

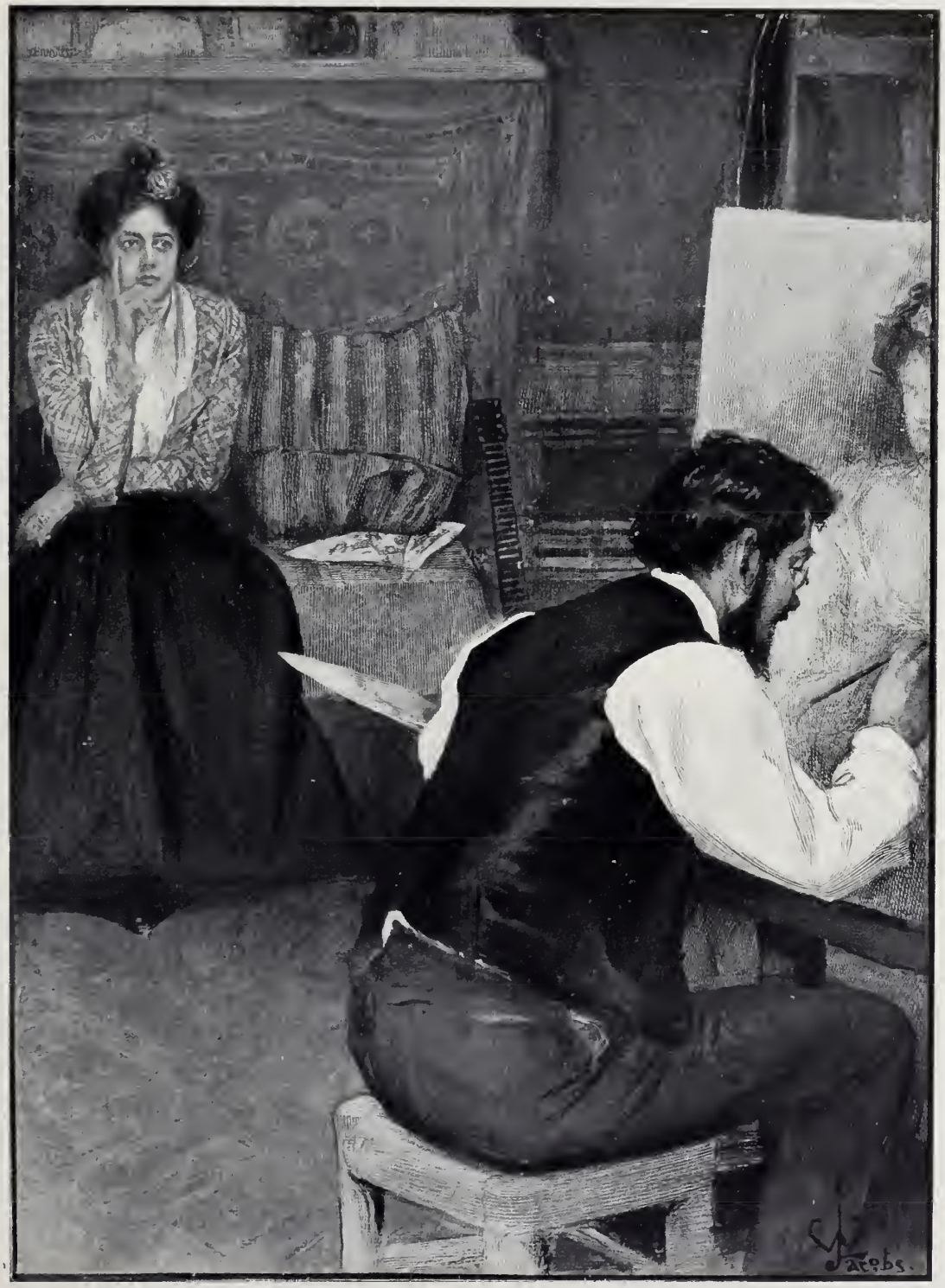
Tom: I signed a lease with you the other day for those bachelor apartments on the fifth floor. I want to make a change in it.

Agent: Very well, sir. What is it?

"I want to change it from six months to ten years."

GLIMPSES AT THE FUTURE.

Snapshot at upper Fifth Avenue in 1930.



UP-TO-DATE PROTRAITURE.

"I have been working on this woman now for five weeks."

"And not yet successful?"

"No. She still complains that the picture looks like her."

"I thought you told me you were well off before you married me?"
"I am sure of it now, my dear!"

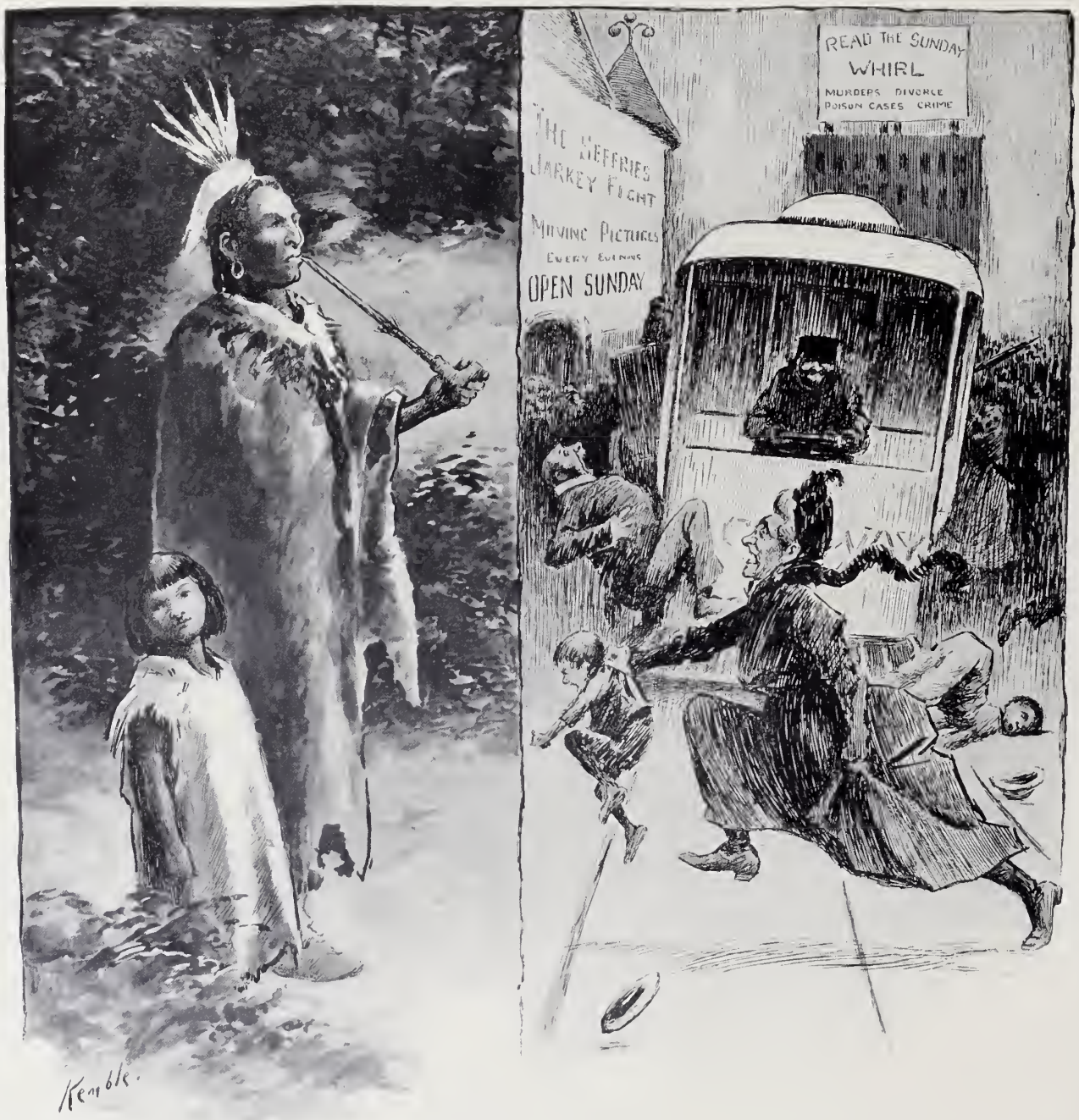
A DOMESTIC DIFFERENCE.

"I can put up with it no longer, madam; I leave the house forever; you will not see me again until the last day."

"And let it be well along in the afternoon, dear."

She: I've heard of men with wooden legs and wooden heads, but you're the first I've heard of with a wooden heart.
He: You wrong me, Bess. It would be wood if it could, but——

She: If I let you kiss me this once, will you promise never to ask me again?
He: Certainly, dear, if you consider it unnecessary.



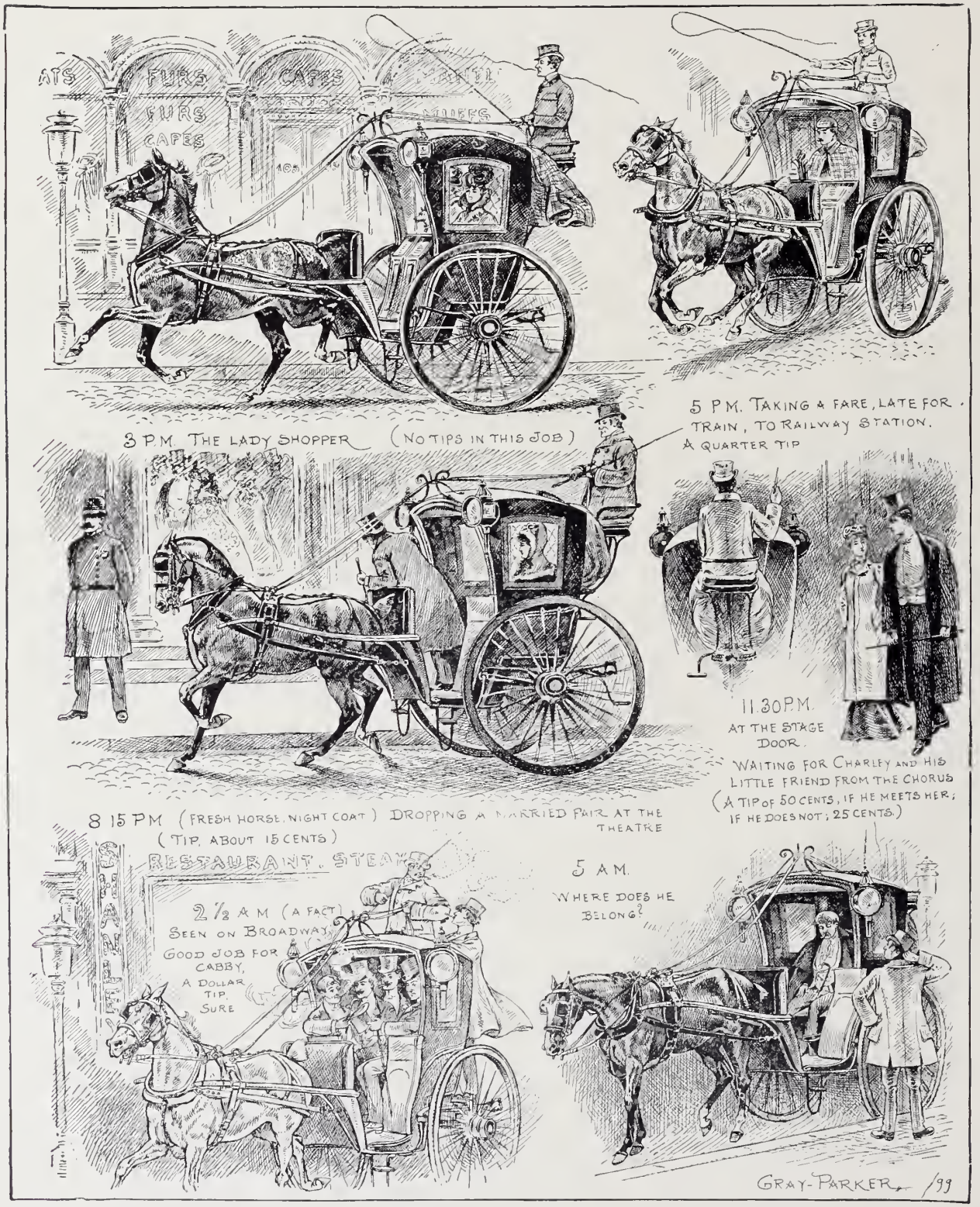
BROADWAY—PAST AND PRESENT.

In the sixteenth century. In the twentieth century.

Chorister: I think music helps religion.
The Clergyman (reflectively): No doubt—no doubt; and then again, we need religion to help us bear up under some music.

"Come along, Martin, let's go to the hanging."
"Hangin'? Hangin'? Who's going to be hanged?"
"Jim Sanders. Come along."
"No, thanks. He's no friend of mine."

She: I will send your presents back to-morrow.
"No hurry. I don't expect to be engaged again for a week or so."


HATS
FURS
CAPES
FURS
CAPES
5 P.M. TAKING A FARE, LATE FOR TRAIN, TO RAILWAY STATION.
A QUARTER TIP
3 P.M. THE LADY SHOPPER (NO TIPS IN THIS JOB)
11.30 P.M.
AT THE STAGE DOOR.
WAITING FOR CHARLEY AND HIS LITTLE FRIEND FROM THE CHORUS
(A TIP OF 50 CENTS, IF HE MEETS HER; IF HE DOES NOT, 25 CENTS.)
8 15 P.M (FRESH HORSE, NIGHT COAT) DROPPING A MARRIED PAIR AT THE THEATRE
(TIP, ABOUT 15 CENTS)
RESTAURANT, STEAM
2½ A.M (A FACT)
SEEN ON BROADWAY.
GOOD JOB FOR CABBY,
A DOLLAR TIP,
SURE
5 A.M.
WHERE DOES HE BELONG?
GRAY-PARKER /99

A FEW HOURS IN THE LIFE OF A HANSOM.

DEGREES OF FOLLY.

"There's no fool like an old fool."
"No. Unless it's the young fool who wants to marry the old fool."

"So you've gone and got married, too, eh? Good for you, old chap!"
"Are you offering your congratulations or bidding for my sympathy?"

"You don't mean to say they are engaged! Isn't there a great different in their ages?"
"Yes; about two hundred thousand dollars."

"You look tired, Edith."

"Tired! I have had this thing for two hours, and neither of us speaks the other's language!"

"Can I see your mistress?"
New Servant: She isn't dressed yet, sir, but I'll ask her.

THE LITERARY MOVEMENT IN AMERICA.

"You should join our book club. Why, last winter I read over a hundred books by giving five minutes a day. I read Nansen's 'Prisoner of Zenda,' Hall Caine's 'Quo Vadis,' Allen's 'Christian,' Julian Hawthorne's 'Choir Invisible,' and Hope's 'Farthest North."

"How charming!"

VARIETY.

Miss Niblick: Don't you get tired of playing golf all the time?
Miss Brassie: Oh, yes. I often feel as if I would like to stop playing and just sit down and talk about it.

ANOTHER MONOPOLY.

LASTING IMPRESSIONS.

Dick Heavystepper (sweetly): I shall remember this dance for many a long day.
"So shall I."

She (petulantly): I don't see why you should hesitate to get married on three thousand dollars a year. Papa says my gowns never cost more than that.

He: But, my darling, we must have something to eat.

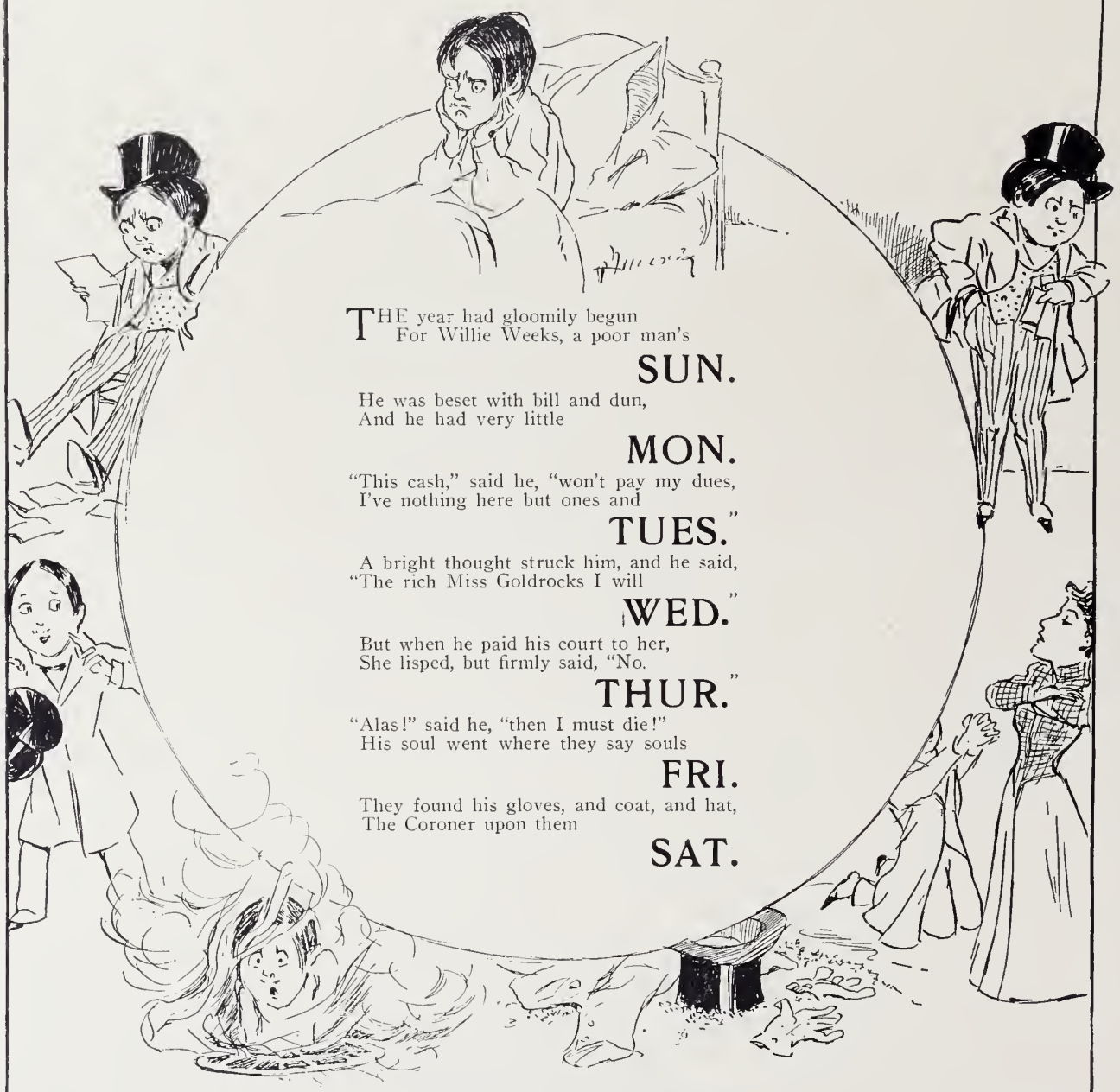
"Oh, William. Always thinking of your stomach!"

IN BOSTON.

His New York Aunt: Then your little brother's education must have been neglected.
Boston Boy: Yes, indeed! Why, he doesn't know the rudiments of metaphysics!

One Week

BY Carolyn Wells



THE year had gloomily begun
For Willie Weeks, a poor man's
SUN.

He was beset with bill and dun,
And he had very little
MON.

"This cash," said he, "won't pay my dues,
I've nothing here but ones and
TUES."

A bright thought struck him, and he said,
"The rich Miss Goldrocks I will
WED."

But when he paid his court to her,
She lisped, but firmly said, "No.
THUR."

"Alas!" said he, "then I must die!"
His soul went where they say souls
FRI.

They found his gloves, and coat, and hat,
The Coroner upon them
SAT.

WITH APOLOGIES TO- O. Herford

A FOND CRITIC.

Wife of His Bosom: Lovely, dear, lovely! But I think those sheep look too much like clouds—er—that is—of course—darling—unless they *are* clouds.

THE DIFFERENCE.

"So he married your girl?"

"No; I failed to marry his, it seems."

SHOCKING.

He: She is a brilliant woman; she shows great familiarity with the poets.
"Heavens!" shrieked the old maid; "does her husband know it?"

GLIMPSES INTO THE FUTURE.

The stage in the near future, as promised by present indications.

"When I get to Paris, papa, I want to know just how much money I can have to buy clothes with."
"Well, my dear, how would, say, a thousand do?"
"Now, papa, I know you don't want me to go about *in rags.*"

"If a woman loves her husband, Ethel, she will give up everything to him!"
"That is a noble sentiment, my dear, which George and his creditors will appreciate, I'm sure."

"I can't make up my mind what to give my husband Christmas."
"Why don't you give him money and let him select his present?"
"I can't afford that."

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

"I hope this proposal of mine hasn't taken you completely by surprise, dearest."
"Well, yes, it has. I long ago abandoned all idea of it."

ABOVE AND BELOW.

SHE lives in the square below me there.
Ah me! If she'd only love me!
She lives in the square below me there,
But moves in a circle above me.

CALENDAR

Said Father Tempus, I have a plan,
I'm going to swear off on the first of

JAN.

But his resolution began to ebb,
He was two days shy by the end of

FEB.

Then he lost his temper and went so far
As to bawl and bluster all through

MAR.

He puffed and blew till he spoiled his shape,
So he took the water cure in

AP.

He took a shower bath every day,
And was most disagreeable all through

MAY.

Then Summer came and he changed his tune—
Any Fool can be good in

JUNE.

But the strain was so great that by and by
He was taken with fever in

JULY.

He only just escaped the morgue,
His temperature was so high in

AUG.

Never were resolutions kept
So well as in convalescent

SEPT.

When he recovered the world was shocked,
For he painted the country red in

OCT.

Then he howled and raged like a fiend in love.
He was full as could be of remorse in

NOV.

It's plain, said he, this thing must cease.
I'll swear off again—at the end of

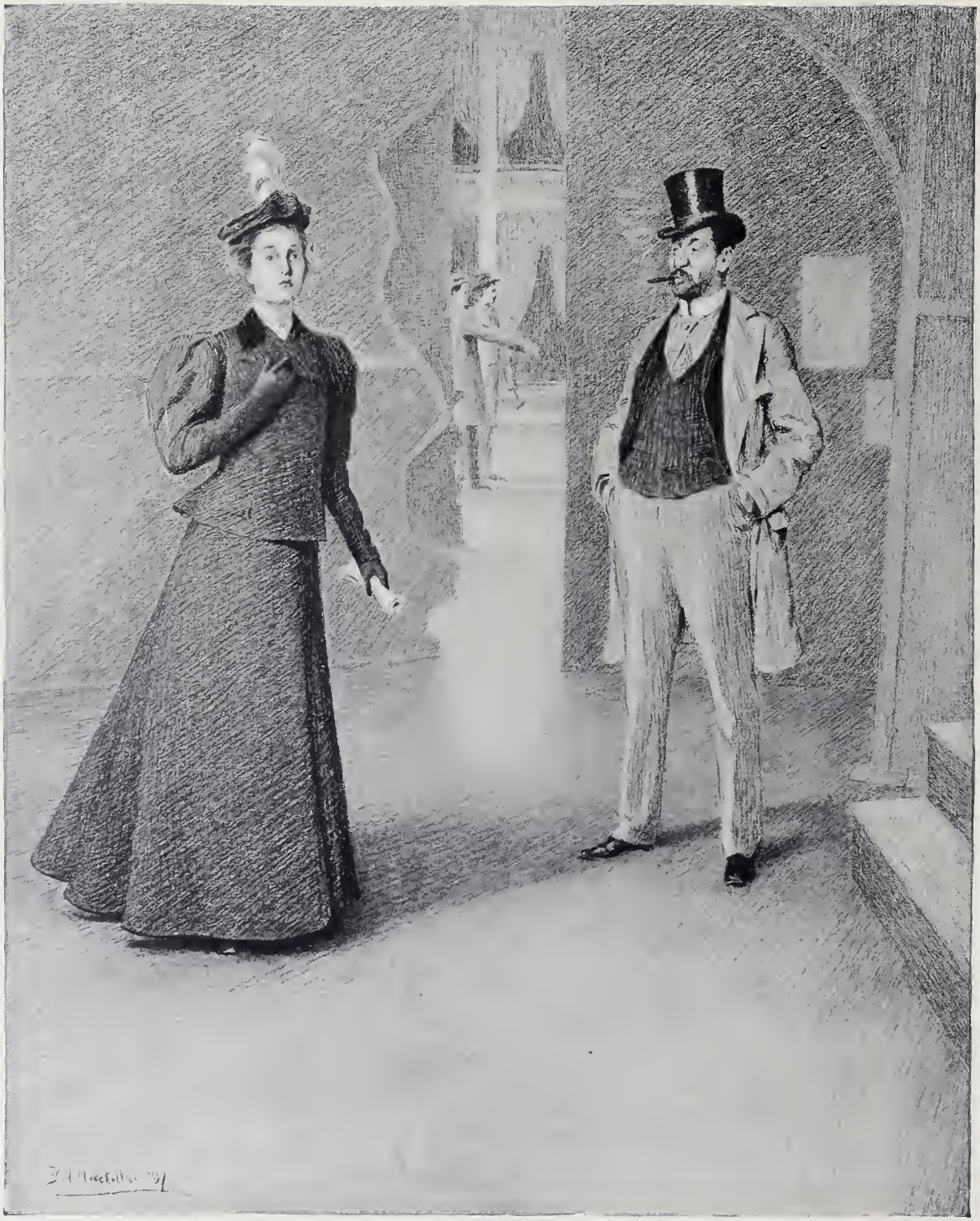
DEC.

Oliver Herford.

"Isn't it terrible the way pugilists pound one another? It only goes to show what people will do for money."
"But a prize-fight only lasts for an hour. What is that to marrying for money."

He: How could you lead me on, when you knew all the time I was in love with you?
"Why, if you hadn't been, how could I have done it?"

"How happy could either fair charmer be, were t'other fair charmer away!"



THE DRAMA IN NEW YORK.

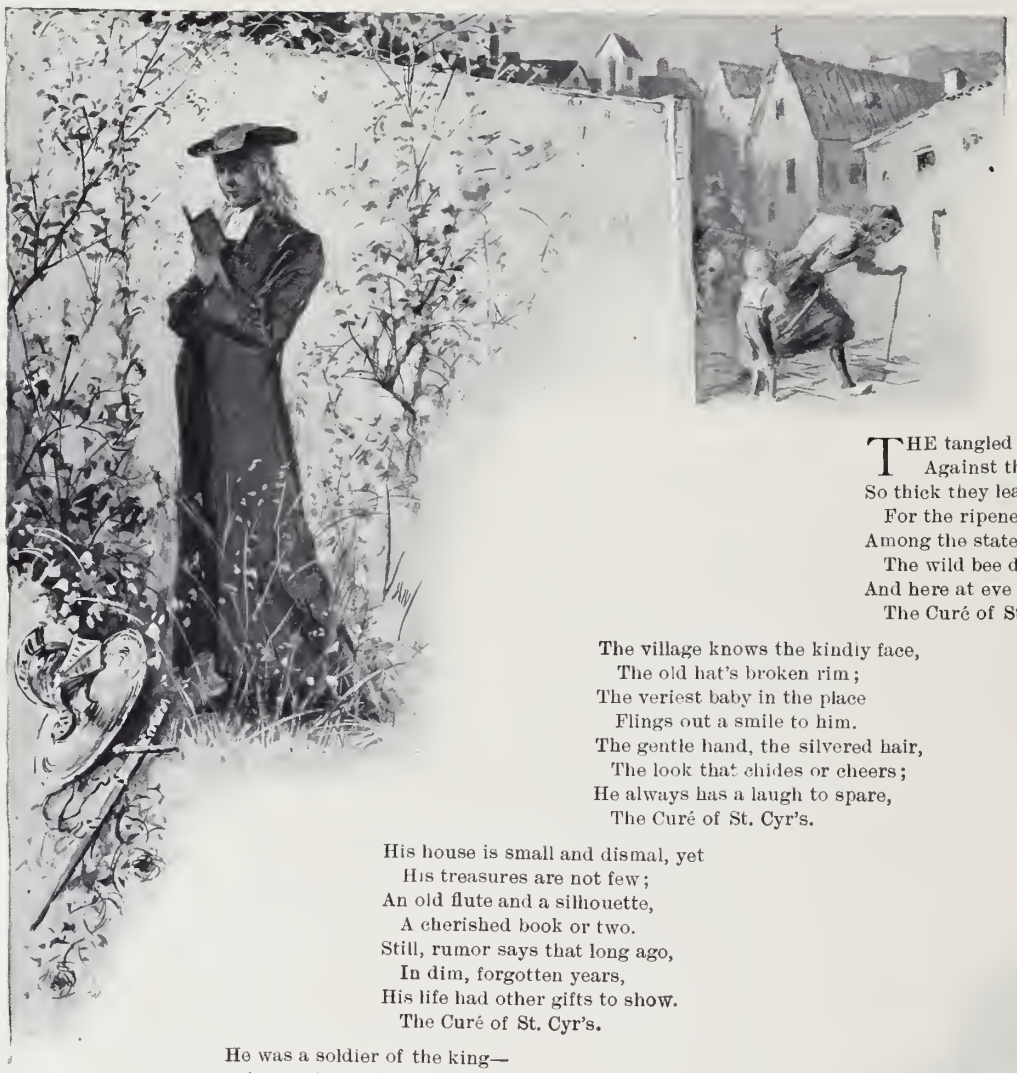
"I wish to go on the stage and would like your opinion as to my chances of success."
"Well, did you bring your tights?"

"That old fellow coming was carried from the railroad accident all smashed up, and he wouldn't even acknowledge he was hurt. Must be a Christian Scientist."

"No. President of the road."

"We have always been enemies, and now we love the same girl."
"How tragic! I wish I could help you."
"You can. You are the girl."

"I had no idea that you were in love with me."
"Neither had I, until I proposed and you rejected me."



The Curé of St. Cyr's.

THE tangled roses twist and bloom
  Against the garden wall,
So thick they leave but scanty room
  For the ripened peach to fall.
Among the stately hollyhocks
  The wild bee drones and veers,
And here at eve he always walks,
  The Curé of St. Cyr's.

The village knows the kindly face,
  The old hat's broken rim;
The veriest baby in the place
  Flings out a smile to him.
The gentle hand, the silvered hair,
  The look that chides or cheers;
He always has a laugh to spare,
  The Curé of St. Cyr's.

His house is small and dismal, yet
  His treasures are not few;
An old flute and a silhouette,
  A cherished book or two.
Still, rumor says that long ago,
  In dim, forgotten years,
His life had other gifts to show.
  The Curé of St. Cyr's.

He was a soldier of the king—
  A courtier learned in bliss;
No man can say what made him fling
  The old life by for this.
He bears, instead of love and mirth,
  The parish hopes and fears—
The little burdens of the earth—
  The Curé of St. Cyr's.

The sunshine floods his garden ways,
  The rose nods to the wind.
Who knows if he regrets the days
  He left so long behind?
Perhaps the silhouette could tell—
  Whose face has felt his tears—
Methinks she knows them over-well,
  Oh, Curé of St. Cyr's!

Theodosia Pickering Garrison.

The Invalid: I heard the other day of a doctor who operated on a lady for appendicitis, found there was absolutely nothing the matter, and sent her a bill for six hundred dollars.

"Well, that wasn't an exceptional case, was it?"

"Oh, yes, it was. The patient recovered."

THE REAL TROUBLE.

"Charley doesn't seem quite as strong as he used to be."
"Oh, I don't know. You must remember that you have gained in weight."

AN OPTIMIST.

The Angel: Don't you think it's a shame for me to go to church alone every Sunday?"
The Brute: Oh, I don't know. You might be doing something worse.

ON THE RIALTO.

The Villian (jealous): That fellow that called on you last night was a great success, I suppose.
The Leading Lady: I don't know when I have been more pleased with my surroundings.

Prominent Society Woman (to popular lecturer): Don't you get tired of saying the same thing over and over again?

"Yes. Don't you?"

"Well, Daisy, shall we pay the house-rent or give a dinner?"
"Why, give the dinner, of course! What good will paid-up house-rent do us if we lose our social position?"

"She refused him, as she thought that he would propose again."
"And did he?"
"Oh, yes. But it was to another girl."

"I see the President commends war as a means of keeping alive 'the great fighting virtues,' and, of course, war *is* a good thing while it lasts. But, after all, Charles, do you feel that war is truly profitable? As for me, unathletic as I am, and near-sighted, I could hardly do excellent work in war. I might brain a child or two, and maybe shoot some women, but I own I don't find the idea wholly engaging, and in the spring months I can harden my heart more agreeably by riding a bicycle in the afternoon down Fifth Avenue. It's a good hazard all the way, and there's this advantage about it, that you don't catch fevers, and, if you're not killed, you have your health."

NOT FOR LOVE.

She: If I should die, I know you would marry again.
"But if I did it would be for money, dear."

LONG ON BROTHERS.

"How would you like to have me for a brother, little girl?"
"Go on! I got seven brothers now."

"Don't undervalue love, dear child. Love in a flat—a *good* flat—on twenty, yes, even on fifteen thousand a year, may easily be preferable to riches without true affection."

SUNRISE BENEATH THE WAVES.

"My dear young lady, do you ever think of marrying?"
"Think! Why, I worry!"

Manager: Unless you brace up I'll have to break our contract.
"Don't say that! I have a child and two husbands to support."

TROUBLE AHEAD.

Mrs. W.: Did your stenographer address those "at home" cards of mine to the list I gave you?
"Yes, but she made a slight error. She sent them to a list of our creditors."

He: A multi-millionaire! Absurd! I have scarcely a million.
"Never mind, dear. I will be *so* economical."

The Leading Man: He is a great manager and it has always been his endeavor to uphold the actor's rights.
The Soubrette: And to "hold up" the actor.

RIVALS.

"Harriet, that pesky dog of yours has given me fleas."
"Dear me, Harry! How you do grumble! You ought to be glad they are on you instead of on poor little Binkie."

THE WATCHFUL EYE OF CAUTION.

"Isn't your mother worried by Captain Shorthouse's attentions to you?"
"Oh, no; since I gave Jack his freedom after the Copper Trust slump, mamma says I'm a real mother to myself, and now she never worries."

TWO PROPOSALS.

The Rejected: And, pray what constitutes the highest happiness?

"The number of friends one has."

"Then I ought to be happy. Every girl I ever proposed to has promised to be a friend to me."

"Young man, I distinctly heard you kissing my daughter."
"Can you swear to that?"
"Well, almost."
"Suppose you go out again, sir, and make sure."

"It is a pretty fable, but after all, Jack, if Galatea had had any experience of life she never would have done it. To stand upon a pedestal and be forever adored is a better job than to live in a flat and be forever changing cooks. Venus had a spite against all pretty woman, Jack."

"I've spent fifteen hundred dollars on that girl in the last six months and now she refuses me."
"But just think of what it would cost if she had accepted you."

His Wife: Good bye, dear. Write often, if it's only a check.

UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

A bachelor's Christmas dream.

LIKE GROWN-UPS.

"Oh, Gertrude! So naughty! And yet you prayed this morning to be made a good girl."
"But, mamma, I didn't mean right away."

A LONG WAY.

"What an innocent girl Miss Peerton is, isn't she?"
"Yes, indeed. She tells me it has taken years to acquire it."

NO REASON TO DOUBT IT.

"Are you sure you love my daughter?"
"Well, she seems to think so, sir, and she has had lots of experience with young men, you know."

THE EXCEPTION.

She: All the world loves a lover.
Despairing Suitor: Yes, excepting the other fellow who loves the same girl.

"I don't know which would be the more considerate, to accept or reject him."
"The one he would get over soonest, my dear."

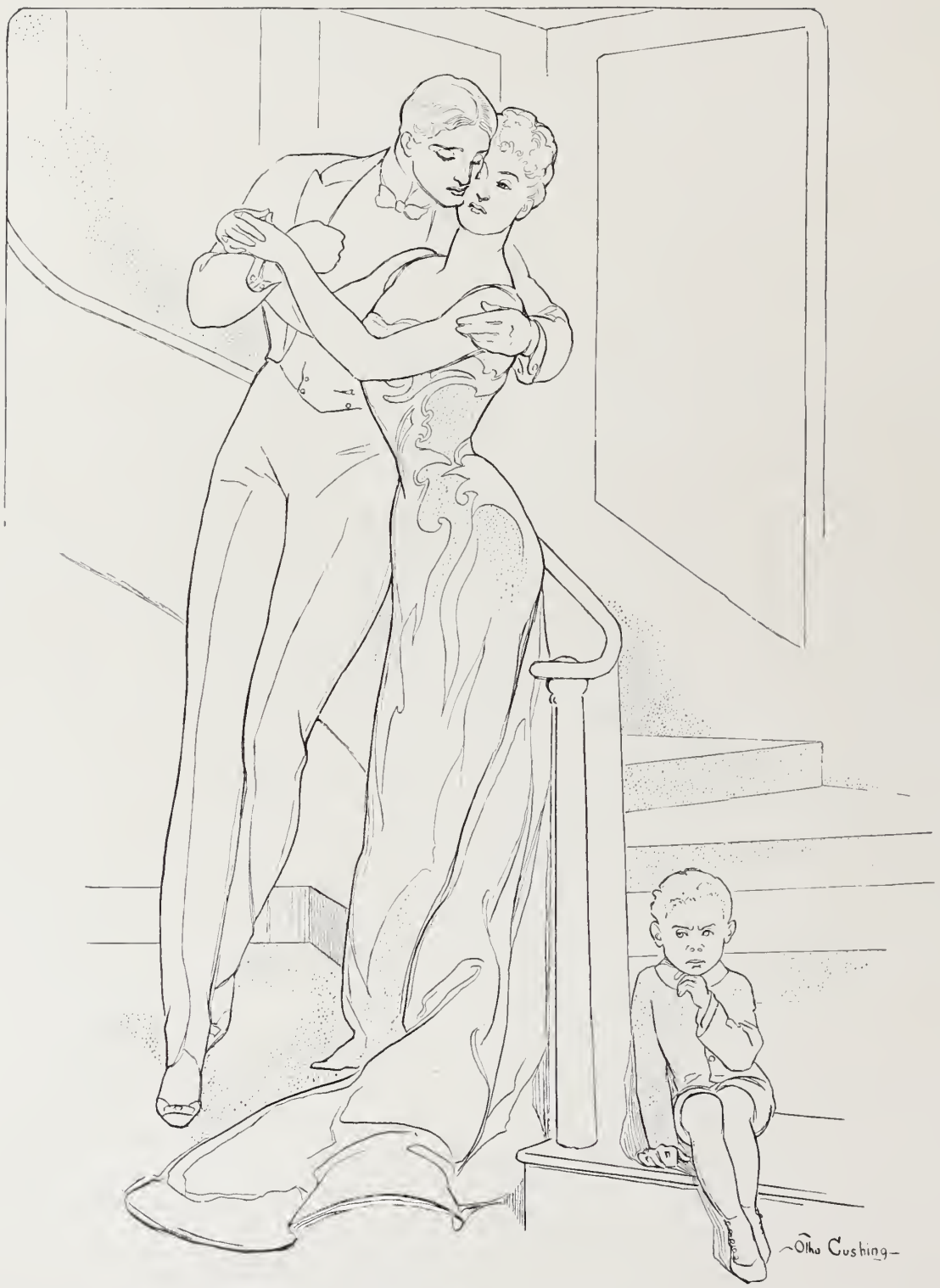
She: Yes, but here is father; he was born in New York, was educated at Columbia, and inherited his money. I call him a typical New Yorker.

He: Sorry not to agree with you.

"Why not, pray?"

"Because the typical New Yorker is born either in Ohio or Jerusalem, has made his money himself, and never wasted any time on education."

Mrs. Dimpleton: I am to see the doctor to-day, and I know he will insist upon my going abroad.
Dimpleton: No, he won't. I met him yesterday, and told him if he sent you abroad I couldn't pay his bill.



The Brother: Shall I stick her for a lump sum, or hold it over her as a perpetual menace?

"Why don't you get married? You have plenty of money, and sixty is the very prime of life."
"I'm going to wait a few more years. Then I can have any girl I want."

Enthusiastic Young Miss: To think of your being a real literary man! I do so long to know how you write things. Can you explain it?

Venerable Hack: It is the simplest thing. You have a mind suitably prepared. You get an idea. The idea being introduced into the mind causes fermentation, during which a scum rises to the top and is carefully removed, leaving a residue of clear thought. This you bottle up for your own use. The scum you sell to a publisher.

A SAGACIOUS SUITOR.

"Her father says he wants me to demonstrate first that I can earn my own living."
"Are you going to try it?"
"What for? Why, I needn't marry her in that case!"

Charles (loquitur): It is quite true, father, as you say, that our religious duties are of signal moment, but they are often perplexing, and some of them often seem to me to conflict with others. Perhaps you and I could cover the ground better if we used some judicious plan of co-operation. Suppose, for example, that you obey the injunction, "Give to him that asketh," and leave me to supplement your efforts by taking no thought for the morrow.

"The chambermaid's down sick; come and help me make the beds."
"Impossible, mamma, dear. I have just ten minutes to get over to the parish house to the meeting of the Willing Workers."

He: Yes, dearest, I have loved before we met; but let us not dig up the past.
"Oh, all right, then; if you don't want to dig up the past, why let's not dig up the future either."

He: So you won't kiss and make up?
"Well, I won't make up."

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